

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 870

To require the Federal Communications Commission to update the national broadband plan, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 5, 2021

Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CASE, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, and Mr. THOMPSON of California) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

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## A BILL

To require the Federal Communications Commission to update the national broadband plan, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-  
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “National Broadband  
5 Plan for the Future Act of 2021”.

6 **SEC. 2. UPDATE TO NATIONAL BROADBAND PLAN.**

7       (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

8           (1) the term “appropriate committees of Con-  
9 gress” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science,  
and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the House of Representatives;

(4) the term “COVID–19 pandemic” means the outbreak and associated public health, economic, and other societal effects of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19) related to the emergency declared by the Secretary of Health and Human Services on January 31, 2020, under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d), and any renewals thereof and any subsequent declarations by the Secretary of Health and Human Services related to the coronavirus;

21                         (5) the term “E-Rate program” means the pro-  
22                         gram set forth under subpart F of part 54 of title  
23                         47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor  
24                         regulations;

1                         (6) the term “Lifeline” means the program set  
2                         forth under subpart E of part 54 of title 47, Code  
3                         of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulations;  
4                         and

5                         (7) the term “national broadband plan” means  
6                         the plan required to be submitted by the Commis-  
7                         sion to the appropriate committees of Congress  
8                         under section 6001(k) of the American Recovery and  
9                         Reinvestment Act of 2009 (47 U.S.C. 1305(k)).

10                         (b) UPDATE.—

11                         (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after  
12                         the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission  
13                         shall submit to the appropriate committees of Con-  
14                         gress a report containing an update to the national  
15                         broadband plan.

16                         (2) CONTENTS.—The update to the national  
17                         broadband plan required under paragraph (1)  
18                         shall—

19                         (A) assess the progress of the United  
20                         States in achieving the goals of the original na-  
21                         tional broadband plan during the 10-year period  
22                         preceding the date of enactment of this Act;

23                         (B) reassess the areas of focus contained  
24                         within the original national broadband plan, in-  
25                         cluding through—



1 development, health care delivery, energy  
2 independence and efficiency, education,  
3 worker training, private sector investment,  
4 entrepreneurial activity, job creation and  
5 economic growth, and other national pur-  
6 poses;

7 (C) examine the effects of the COVID–19  
8 pandemic on how the people of the United  
9 States—

10 (i) learn, including—

11 (I) an analysis of the nature and  
12 extent of gaps between students who  
13 have access to broadband internet ac-  
14 cess service at home and students who  
15 do not have access to such service;  
16 and

17 (II) an identification of specific  
18 ways to close the gaps described in  
19 subclause (I), including through the  
20 E-Rate program and Lifeline;

21 (ii) work, including by developing de-  
22 tailed proposals that could make working  
23 from home more practical for workers and  
24 more productive for employers;

(iii) receive medical information and

treatment, including by—

(I) reviewing the adequacy and

effectiveness of telemedicine programs

implemented at the Federal and State

levels; and

## (II) developing proposals for how

the programs described in subclause

(I) could be improved or expanded;

and

(iv) participate in civic communica-

tions, including by analyzing the effects

that the COVID-19 pandemic and the in-

rastructure with respect to broadband

internet access service in the United States

have had on—

(I) free expression and non-com-

mercial speakers in the United States;

and

(II) the availability of credible

news and information, including pub-

lic health infor

that pandemic;

(D) analyze the change in reliance that the

1           enabled by broadband internet access service as  
2           a result of the COVID–19 pandemic; and

3           (E) develop—

4                  (i) short-term proposals to address the  
5                  reliance described in subparagraph (D);  
6                  and

7                  (ii) a long-term plan to address any  
8                  systemic privacy and security challenges  
9                  associated with the use of services de-  
10                 scribed in subparagraph (D).

11                 (3) SUBSEQUENT ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later  
12                 than 1 year after the date on which the Commission  
13                 submits the report of the Commission required  
14                 under paragraph (1), and annually thereafter, the  
15                 Commission shall submit to the appropriate commit-  
16                 tees of Congress a report on the progress of the  
17                 Commission in achieving the goals of the national  
18                 broadband plan, as updated under this subsection.

19                 (4) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.—The Commission  
20                 shall publish the report submitted under paragraph  
21                 (1), and each report submitted under paragraph (3),  
22                 on a publicly available website.

1       (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
2 are authorized to be appropriated to the Commission such  
3 sums as may be necessary to carry out this section.

